DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 219 722 CS 006 754

AUTHOR Jobe, Ronald A.
TITLE Compute Your Daily Reading Interest: Motivational Strategies to Reading Growth.
PUB DATE Apr 82
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Far West Regional Conference of the International Reading Association (8th, Portland, OR, April 1-3, 1982).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Class Activities; Elementary Secondary Education; Library Role; *Motivation Techniques; Reading Attitudes; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Interests; *Teacher Influence; *Teacher Role; Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

A survey of adult active readers showed that those learning to read before starting school were influenced by parents who read to them, who read themselves for enjoyment, or who owned many books. The public library was also a critical influence. Classroom teachers can have more influence on their students' reading habits by showing that they themselves are active readers. Teacher strategies that will improve student reading interests are as follows: (1) help improve the school library and acquaint students with it; (2) enlist people with high "child appeal" to advertise reading to children and introduce students to the newspaper; (3) encourage students to keep track of their current reading interests on a classroom graph; (4) encourage students to predict future interests based on the graph; (5) acquaint students with new authors and illustrators; (6) look into literature in translation; (7) watch for books receiving literary awards; (8) watch for books receiving awards for illustrations; (9) keep children immersed in the books they find enjoyable and readable; (10) have children suggest books they would take with them on special trips, introduce titles that follow the same vein as a favorite book, and introduce poetry by candlelight to ensure pleasant literary memories; and (11) allow time for creative writing activities so that students gain a heightened appreciation of the written word. (HTH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED219722

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

COMPUTE YOUR DAILY READING INTEREST:

MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES TO READING GROWTH

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Ronald A. Jobe

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Ronald A. Jobe
Department of Language Education
Faculty of Education
University of British Columbia

CS006254

COMPUTE YOUR DAILY READING INTEREST:

MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES TO READING GROWTH

"U.S. INFLATION RATE SLOWS --THANKS TO HARD TIMES"

We reading teachers ponder such newspaper headlines as the above with some inflated degree of job security and regular cheques, yet complacently hear veiled threats of larger classes, fewer colleagues on staff, and more skills to 'pak' on fewer pages. Reading newspapers we realize the extent of the seriousness of depressed markets, layoffs, tight money, and general economic gloom. Reading television screens shows us that the Dow Jones average is down but, reading the loan signs we find interest rates are still dramatically UP! However, poor as conditions may seem, Margot Zemach says, It Could Always be Worse.

At the banks the daily interest rates are UP! Interest is high. How is the interest rate in your classroom? Do you have a daily interest-bearing account with the children? Do high interest rates pay off in high reading growth dividends? How can you as a reading teacher be a motivational influence on your children?

What are the Influences on Reading?

Initially one must consider what influences the reading habits of our students. When they learned to read what were the influences on them? Those that learned to read at school obviously were affected by the enthusiasm of the teacher, or by their own desire to read based primarily on parental expectations, or by peer example. A recent survey I conducted with adult active readers showed that those

learning to read before going to school were influenced by parents who read to them, who read themselves for enjoyment, or who owned many books. A second reported influence was that of the public library. Obviously as children these adults were taken regularly to borrow books and to attend pre-school story hours. Surprisingly, a third influence to attend appeared to be receiving books as gifts. Too frequently adults do not recognize this opportunity but in recalling their own early reading influences they placed a good deal of value on gift books.

What influences you when you select a book to read at a bookstore or the public library? If you watch another reader select a book you will realize that they first skim the covers on the shelf noting the details of the cover, front first, and then the blurb on the back. Is the annotation enticing? Will there be adventure, romance or intrigue? The next step is to read the blurb on the inside page even if it is identical to the one found on the back cover! Some readers then read the first paragraph and first page to gain insight into the writing style of the author. If the author has not captured them by the endof the first paragraph then many will simply put the book down. Some readers will also read the last few pages to determine if the effort of reading the book to the end is worthwhile.

What Is Your Real Reading Influence?

The crucial question for each of us as teachers should be: How can we be a more effective reading influence? Is reading important to you? SHOW IT! How would anyone know that you are an active

enthusiastic reader? Where is your book at this very moment? How can you be a visible reader if you have no book? Consider your world of reading: do you make specific times when you read just for you? What do you read other than stop signs? Poetry by red light can become a fascinating new experience--a stanza a stop! Where do you make time to read--at the doctor's office, in the grocery line, at the bus stop, or just those few minutes before leaving for work. It is important to remember that we do not find time to read but rather we must MAKE time to read.

When you've just read a good book you have to share it. Laughing aloud at certain passages will guarantee interest because we all hate to be left out of a joke. Be a fellow reader with your colleagues and discuss books in the staff room. You must start with the teachers because once the students see the teachers reading and enjoying the process they will get more involved too. A reader understands the need of a fellow reader to have time to read. They don't have to be persuaded twice! Ask sincerely about the books the children have in your class are reading and genuinely care about their comments. When was the last time you took a child's suggestion and read the book in one evening in order to be able to talk about it the next day? Why not return a book to the library in front of the children? A visible reading teacher creates a mutual interest and enthusiasm for reading. Discussing books read will soon become the acceptable practice in the classroom. Daily interest comes with daily sharing!

Investment strategies for Reading Growth

The objectives for the following reading strategies are to improve

the degree of the interaction between the reader and the book, to make the familiar refreshingly new, and to reflect new outlooks and thoughts about the material read. Watch your daily interest grow!

1. Improve the condition of the Stock Exchange

The Stock Exchange? Why the school library or resource centre! What does the condition of your school library tell students about the school, the staff and the importance of the reading process? Reading teachers need to be vocal in the operation of the resource centre because it operates as an influential core of the reading program. Hence, volunteer to jazz up the exchange!

Should the stock exchange cover-up? Good gracious NO! Show the covers boldly, by displaying books with the covers facing outwards. Recent trends add an ever increasing appeal to paperbacks primarily because the covers are brighter, glossier and more realistic in design. Why not have students design covers for the rebound books and have them laminated to give new life to old editions?

2. Advertise Using the Safeway Approach

As all Safeway stores advertise, make the children aware of the power of advertising techniques. What are they and how can they be used to influence our decisions? A visit to the local Safeway store will often provide startling revelations for the children. They will notice attractive displays with specials on every aisle, books for sale placed near the doors, bright lighting, many advertised specials, yet many more unadvertised in-store stock selections. Perhaps the

SUPER BUYS should read.

SUPER READ!

25% thinner for faster reading!

30% larger picture size!

Don't ignore the advertising power of using recommendations by famous people. I was in a school in Minneapolis which had the Twin's stars both baseball and football read a story book onto a cassette tape so that the children could read along with their favourites. Needless to say, this was a tremendous technique. Which people have high child appeal in your area? Why not ask them to read for the children in your school?

Don't forget the newspaper. As this is the basal reader of society it should be an automatic part of any reading program. It has a high interest level for everyone and the feature sections allow for all to take advantage of it. Children, after studying the headlines or ads. could write some for their favourite stories. Shel Silverstein's poem "For Sale, One Sister for Sale!" should provide all the motivation necessary for this project. The advice column also serves to intrigue children as evidenced by one grade six class which wrote Dear Ann letters.

Dear Ann,

I have this terrible problem. My youngest son has pneumonia. Moving day is five days away and we have to go to the woods because the farmer comes and plows the ground and ruins our home. My son can't get a cold or he will get worse. Help me, please!

(Mrs Frisby)

Dear Ann,

I have a problem. I have just come back from a special school for the crippled children. My mother says I will be going to the elementary school which my brother and sisters attend. I am afraid, for I will be the only one with cerebral palsy. But I want to find out who this Piet is that my brother keeps talking about. Please help me.

(Mine for Keeps)

3. Graph the Sales Chart

Because it's a ticker tape market that fluctuates regularly, ask the students how the market is doing in order to find out what is up or down this week. Encourage the students to graph the interest areas to show how many books have been read.

4. Analyze the Market

Students could be encouraged to prepare a market analysis based on the reading habits of the class and the school. Predict the market trends! Students might interview a book broker (librarian, bookseller) and get the list of the best buys or the HOT HITS! These can then be shared either by oral reviews or by listings on a bulletin board. A radio show format entitled "The Book Market" offers reading classes a means of reviewing good books. This could be placed on a cassette tape in the library or on the school's PA system. Imagine the surprise of the entire school if the announcements were concluded by,

"These announcements have been brought to you by the readers of 'The Undertaker's Gone Bananas', the book for those

wanting to solve a mystery without ending up in a casket!"

Market trends can be noted and quoted. Students will readily be aware that this is the year of the teenage romance; love and the older woman Harlequin-style is out and younger gals are in! The major influence of series books reflects a fast-paced selling technique. These books are conveniently arranged by number so that readers don't have to worry about the author or the title--just #23 or #31!

Encourage your students to influence the market by creating the TOP HITS! Establish awards similar to those given by the record companies. The children could be encouraged to select and promote a book to receive such an award. They then have to decide on the qualities of the book which will sell it, design posters, arrange ads, deliver PA announcements, graph reading charts amd design buttons. This project gives the students a remarkable understanding of not only the publishing field but of the successful influence of other advertising campaigns.

5. Invest in High Risk Securities

It is time to consider making students aware of new authors and illustrators. Such an author is Garnett Hewitt (Yteck and the Arctic Orchid) and his recounting of the dream-vision he had while visiting in Northern Ontario. Heather Woodall's illustrations delight the eye with their richness of colour and intensity of tone. Monica Hughes has recently written two books set in outer space on the planet of Isis which feature the teenaged girl Olwen and the changes to her life because of the arrival of the earth settlers. Keeper of the Isis

and Guardian of the Isis Light will rivet readers to the pages.

6. Gamble on the Foreign Market

It is time to check out the exchange values of literature in translation. These books do appeal to English-speaking children and offer them a unique opportunity to experience life as seen through the eyes of characters living in other countries. This year's Batchelder Award winner for the best book translated into English is The Battle Horse by Harry Kullman of Sweden. It will appeal to older readers who remember playing horsefights with their friends. Imagine going even further and having some boys deck themselves as knights and having others of less social consequence becoming their horses. This novel is a powerful statement on how serious some play can become with sometimes tragic results. Last year's Batchelder winner was Else Pelgrom's splendid translation from the Dutch The Winter When Time Was Frozen. A young Dutch girl viewed the turbulence of war-time Holland from the calm routine of her family's farm. A never-ending parade of desperate straggling humanity winds its way across the pages in front of the farmyard. A nation in distress yet with sufficient heart to care.

7. Watch the Gold Market

GOLD, the one commodity which fascinates all mankind receives considerable attention in the children's literature field through the yearly presentation of awards signalled by gold stickers on the cover. Who are these award books for? Selected by a committee of adults, questions have long been raised as to their suitability for children. Recent selections of the Newbery Award have increased the amount of

skepticism and have slightly tarnished the awards image. This is actually a good sign as it overcomes the attitude that all Newbery Award books should be in every school library. Be selective when considering award winners, but do remember that there is nothing like a gold seal to sell a book.

8. Check Out the Silver Market

Secondary attention has always been paid to the illustrators of books for children. Despite the Caldecott award with its silver seal, few references are made in reviews to the quality and appropriateness of the illustrations. Yet we know that their value is up, so much so that there is heavy trading today in picture books for adults. Maurice Sendak's new book Outside Over There, for example, will appeal primarily to adults seeking the philosophical statement which must be lurking behind the cloaks of the babies! The problem for the teacher is to determine just who the audience is for certain picture books. Chris Van Allsburg successfully appeals to adults and children in his Jumanji, a startling but revealing account of a brother and sister playing the Jumanji game (akin to snakes and ladders) and having many strange things happen. All readers will rejoice in the refreshing perspectives of the artist; adults with no heads, a stampede of rhinos in the living room, chimps in the kitchen, and a boa constrictor on the mantle piece. The delightful ending showing two boys who do not like to follow instructions carrying the game away conjures up splendid images of future events.

Quality picture books enrich our lives by providing new perspectives and aesthetic experiences. The whole realm of beauty,

taste, and appreciation can thus be stated and refined for our students.

9. Blue Chip Securities

Basically what children are interested in are good safe reads. The want books which they know will be enjoyable, full of adventure and also readable. Is it any wonder that Beverley Cleary is an all-time hit with children? Her Henry Huggins, Runaway Ralph, Socks, and Ramona the Pest are assured popular fame.

Walt Morey, another writer of inestimable popularity (Gentle Ben) specifically structures the plot to gain their attention and provides for much thrilling action to capture their interests.

Making books come alive is the essence of what our literature programs are all about. No easier method can be followed than to have the children, dressed as their favourite characters, give biographical reports, carry on telephone conversations, and make T.V. commercials.

10. RRSP: Registered Retirement Saving Plans

Special attention should be given to books to take with you in order to stock up for further remembrances! These could be books that even your grandparents might like to read! "Beyond Charlotte" could be taken as the theme for sharing books in this vein. What books would Homer Price or Ramona the Pest like to read? Children could make suggestions of books to take with them on special trips or to lost regions of the world.

There is no better way to take memories with you than to share poetry by candlelight with your students. This introduces romance into the lives of both the reader and the listeners. Simply darken a room,

provide two candles and enjoy the power of language in this haunting atmosphere. Children will long remember the poems that they hear under these circumstances.

11. Heighten Consumer Awareness

It is essential that we treat students, not only as consumers of literature and language, but also as producers. When they become producers of language something new is created in their lives. They gain an appreciation of the written language, the joys, frustrations, and rewards of sharing their ideas, as well as an appreciation of the time, patience, and inspiration necessary to produce any work of art.

Reading interest does pay daily dividends but only if reading teachers provide high interest rates and invest their energies in print dividends! Approach reading as a fellow reader, appreciator, and producer of the written word. As visible readers we must compute our daily reading interest!